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A PROGRAM OF THE JOHN SAND JAMES L. KNIGHT FOUNDATION

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### **3rd Annual African Diaspora Dance & Drum Festival**

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I spent last weekend at the Little Haiti Cultural Center (LHCC) for the 3rd annual Africa Diaspora Dance & Drum Festival of Florida presented by Delou Africa. The weekend, which featured drum, dance and singing workshops for children and adults, culminated in a heart-thumping, raucous fire-in-the-soul-lifting performance by the Delou Africa Dance Ensemble.



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Delou Africa. Photo by Neil de la Flor

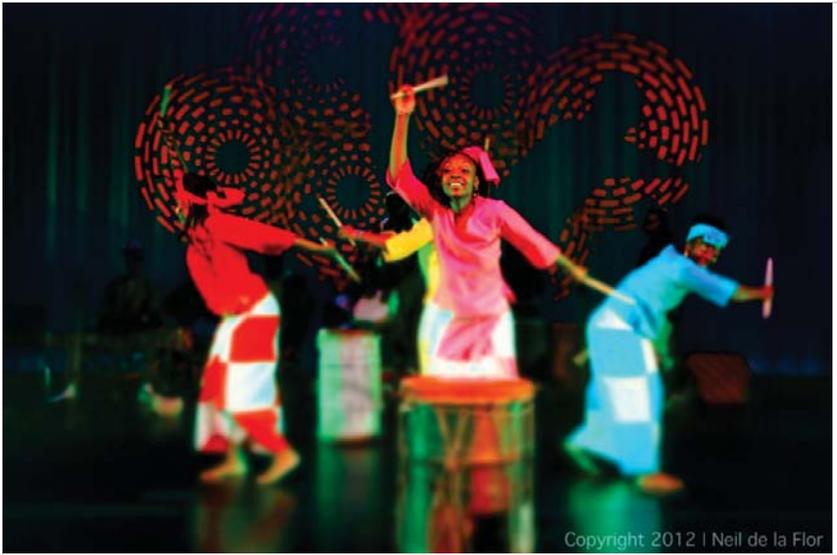
Before the Saturday night headline performance began, an announcement was made. If you see or hear something you like, get up and let us know about it. No joke. As the evening progressed, the crowd in the packed auditorium raised the roof off the LHCC. No one sat for too long as the drummers banged their drums and the dancers pounded the earth with the force of the mighty gods.



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Delou Africa. Photo by Neil de la Flor

At various points throughout the evening, especially when the drummers were on stage, several audience members jumped on stage — some danced while others tossed money at the drummers. It was fun experiencing this outpouring of audience appreciation. And the joy was evident on the faces of the performers.



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Delou Africa. Photo by Neil de la Flor

Speaking of which...one of my favorite sets of the evening came when six or seven drummers took the stage. Each drummer was given a three- or four-minute solo. There was one drummer whose face exploded with ecstasy. She expressed all there is and all there will ever need to be said about doing what you love to do. I wanted to be her in that moment on stage banging life out of her lifeless drum conjuring the spirits that floated somewhere between this world and the next.



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Delou Africa. Photo by Neil de la Flor

For more information about Delou Africa or future events, visit [delouafrica.com](http://delouafrica.com).

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